

Message Text

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63

ACTION AID-31

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 /039 W
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R 020740Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6714
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: RED: SCHOLARSHIPS FOR PAPUA NEW GUINEA: PNG ASSOCIATE
MEMBERSHIP SEAMEO

REF: STATE 289996 (NOTAL)

1. REFTEL PARA 3 REQUESTED RED VIEWS/INFORMATION RE POSSIBLE SEAMEO MEMBERSHIP FOR PNG/OTHER PACIFIC ISLAND STATES. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP DESIGNED ORIGINALLY TO ACCOMMODATE INTERESTED DONOR COUNTRIES. AUSTRALIA, NZ, FRANCE HAVE ACQUIRED SUCH STATUS; US IS ONLY AN OBSERVER. JAPAN HAS FLIRTED WITH SEAMEO RE ASSOCIATE STATUS FOR SEVERAL YEARS WITHOUT SUCCEEDING IN CONVINCING SEAMEO THAT ASSOCIATE STATUS DESERVES FRANCHISE. PRESENT GOJ DEMARCHE FOR ASSOCIATE STATUS NOT INCONSISTENT THIS POINT.

2. PROCEDURALLY, RED SUGGESTS EMBASSY PORT MORESBY CONSIDER INITIATING ACTION BILATERALLY WITH HOST MFA RESULTING IN EVENTUAL DIRECT APPROACH TO SEAMEO THROUGH BANGKOK SECRETARIAT (SEAMES). RED PREPARED SERVE INTERLOCUTORY ROLE FOR EMBASSY BUT BELIEVES DIRECT PNG-SEAMES CONNECTION CORRECT APPROACH. PNG REPRESENTED IN BANGKOK BY AUSTRALIA; THIS SITUATION COULD RESULT IN AUSTRALIA INTERFACING WITH SEAMES. NOTE THAT FINAL DECISIONS RE ASSOCIATE STATUS REST WITH COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. COUNCIL CONVENES ANNUALLY. NEXT COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULED FOR LATE MARCH 1977. IN ADDITION TO AUSTRALIA REPRESENTING PNG IN BANGKOK, ISSUE OF POSSIBLE FUTURE US FUNDING PNG SCHOLARSHIPS MIGHT PROVE SENSITIVE ISSUE. NOTE
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RECENT TO AND FRO WITH CANBERRA AND WELLINGTON OVER USG PARTICIPA-

TION FUNDING OF ESCAP: SOPAC: CCOP SUVA, FIJI OPERATIONAL COSTS
FOR PERIOD SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 1976.

3. CONVERSATIONS WITH SEAMES SENIOR OFFICER RE PNG/PACIFIC
ISLAND ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP ELICITED SYMPATHETIC PERSONAL RESPONSE
ALONG FOLLOWING LINES. BELIEVES ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP MIGHT BE
SPLIT IN TWO CATEGORIES: VIZ. A) EXISTING ONE FOR DONORS SUCH AS
NZ, AUSTRALIA, FRANCE, WITH ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION DOLS. 10,000 OR
MORE TO SUPPORT SECRETARIAT (SEAMES) PLUS VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS
TO SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (SEDF); AND B) NEW CATEGORY
FOR LLDC WHERE FINANCIAL OBLIGATION MIGHT BE WAIVED. RATIONALE
FOR THIS ENLIGHTENED POSITION BASED ON SEAMEO INSTITUTIONAL
MATURITY CHARACTERIZED BY INCREASING OUTWARD ORIENTATION. BELIEF
BASED ALSO ON CONFIDENCE AND SELF-RECOGNITION THAT SEAMEO COM-
PLEX HAS MEASURABLE WORTH AND ATTRACTIVENESS FOR COUNTRIES
BEYOND BOUNDARIES SEASIA. NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT NO STAFF WORK
DONE ON THIS MATTER. COMMUNICATION FROM PNG MIGHT TRIGGER SUCH
AND GET ISSUE ON MARCH AGENDA.
WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEMBERSHIP, EDUCATION GRANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BANGKO32752
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760446-1084
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761276/aaaacoei.tel
Line Count: 80
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AID
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 289996
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <21 SEP 2004 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RED: SCHOLARSHIPS FOR PAPUA NEW GUINEA: PNG ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP SEAMEO
TAGS: SEDU, PP, SEAMEO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006